NM 6103: Introduction

Subhayan Mukerjee, Ph.D.

Department of Communications and New Media, National University of Singapore

13/1/2021

Introductions

Who am I?

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- Subhayan Mukerjee

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- Subhayan Mukerjee
  - Joined the CNM faculty in October 2020
  - Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania (2020)

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  - Joined the CNM faculty in October 2020
  - Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania (2020)
- Research interests:
  - Digital Media
  - Online human behavior
  - Computational methods

Who are you?

- Let's go around the table
  - Background
  - Research interests
  - Experience with research
  - Knowledge of statistics
  - Knowledge of basic programming

Course Details

Structure

- 13 weeks, 2.5 hours a week

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- Weeks 1 to 6: Research design and "traditional" quant methods

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  2. Fundamentals of Research Design

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  3. Surveys and Observational Research

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  4. Experimental Research

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  4. Experimental Research
  5. Content Analysis

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  3. Surveys and Observational Research
  4. Experimental Research
  5. Content Analysis
  6. Mid semester review + proposal presentations (more on this soon)

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  7. Ethics of social research

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  12. Experimental research in the digital age
  13. Final presentations

Evaluation

- 5 components

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  1. Participation: 15%

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  1. Participation: 15%
  2. Group discussion: 15%
  3. Individual research proposal and presentation: 15%
  4. Individual assignments: 2 x 10% = 20%
  5. Group research paper and presentation: 35% (5% peer evaluation)

Evaluation

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  - do the readings, engage with the class, throughout the semester

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  - active participation is key!

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  - Discussing group chooses 2 papers focusing on the week's method and shares them with class one week prior
  - Papers should preferably be from top communication / media research journals
    - Journal of Communication, Journal of Computer Mediated Communication, Political Communication, New Media and Society, Social Media and Society, Communication Research, Communication Methods and Measures

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  - Individual research proposal (due Week 6, 11:59 PM) 10%

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  - In-class presentation (week 6) 5%

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  - Assignment 1: Research Design (given on Week 7, due Week 8 11:59 PM) 10%

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  - Assignment 1: Research Design (given on Week 7, due Week 8 11:59 PM) 10%
  - Assignment 2: Stats (given on Week 10, due Week 12 11:59 PM) 10%

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  - Peer review 5%

General rules

- Attendance is mandatory

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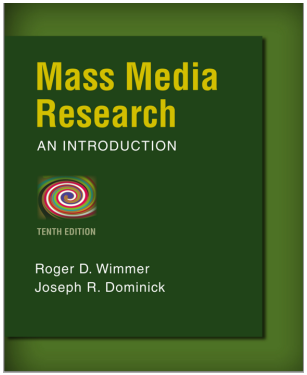
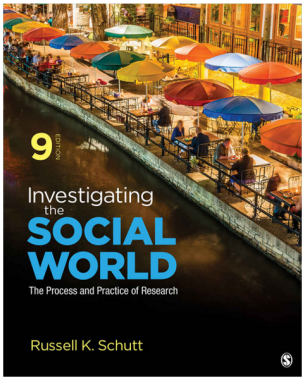
- Late submission policy: 10% of the component's total is deducted for every 24 hours

Textbooks



Mass Media Research, Wimmer & Dominick, 10th ed



Investigating the Social World, Russell Schutt, 9th ed

Other Readings

- Will be posed on lumiNUS

Questions about the course?

Getting Started

What is research?

Trying to discover something (hopefully new)

Image source: https://www.pharmaceuticalonline.com/doc/how-sherlock-holmes-helped-me-improve-my-microbiological-root-cause-analyses-0001

Quantitative vs Qualitative research

Quantitative

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- What would a quantitative equivalent of this study look like?

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  - Engage with each of the points of difference between qualitative and quantitative studies from the previous slide

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- What would a quantitative equivalent of this study look like?
  - Engage with each of the points of difference between qualitative and quantitative studies from the previous slide
- What insight would we gain / lose by conducting the quantitative study instead?

Exercise

- Interpretivism?

Exercise

- Interpretivism?
  - "During the open coding phase, two of the authors read the transcripts, identified relevant broad categories of the phenom-ena-that is, use of mobile phone and social media, incidental encounter of news, and so on-and grouped the evidence of them in separate files. Then, during the axial coding phase, this evidence was examined looking for subcategories-that is, spatial and temporal dimensions, reading practices, and so on-and making connections among them and also among categories. Finally, during the selective coding phase, we probed deeper into those connections to develop the analytical story line." (pg. 3528)

Exercise

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- Phenomenology?
- Understanding lived experiences

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  - "WhatsApp nowadays is like a tool, like another hand, no? Everybody uses it and it is super indispensable." (pg. 3530)

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- Understanding lived experiences
  - "I have [the television] in the background and if something catches my attention, then I sit down [to watch]." (pg. 3530)
  - "WhatsApp nowadays is like a tool, like another hand, no? Everybody uses it and it is super indispensable." (pg. 3530)
  - "Twitter is what I do the most when I'm in the bus." (pg. 3531)

Exercise

- Methods?

Exercise

- Methods?
  - In-depth interviews

Exercise

- Methods?
  - In-depth interviews
- Structure?

Exercise

- Methods?
  - In-depth interviews
- Structure?
  - Evolving, open-ended

Exercise

- What would the quantitative equivalent of such a study look like?

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- How would you move from subjectivity to objectivity?

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- What would the quantitative equivalent of such a study look like?
- How would you move from subjectivity to objectivity?
- What would you gain and lose in the process?

Induction versus Deduction

Induction

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Induction

- Derive a theory from observation to explain the observation

Deduction

Induction versus Deduction

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  - When I eat peanuts, my throat swells up (**observation**)

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- Begin with a theory, observe, conclude

Induction versus Deduction

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- Derive a theory from observation to explain the observation
  - When I eat peanuts, my throat swells up (**observation**)
  - I likely have peanut allergy (**theory**)

Deduction

- Begin with a theory, observe, conclude
  - All dogs are cute (**theory**)

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  - When I eat peanuts, my throat swells up (**observation**)
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Deduction

- Begin with a theory, observe, conclude
  - All dogs are cute (**theory**)
  - Snowy is a dog (**observation**), hence Snowy is cute (**conclusion**)

Induction versus Deduction

Induction

- Derive a theory from observation to explain the observation
  - When I eat peanuts, my throat swells up (**observation**)
  - I likely have peanut allergy (**theory**)
- With induction we are never fully sure. We make the best guess.

Deduction

- Begin with a theory, observe, conclude
  - All dogs are cute (**theory**)
  - Snowy is a dog (**observation**), hence Snowy is cute (**conclusion**)
- Deduction is definitive, precise

Induction versus Deduction

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Induction

- Observation $\rightarrow$ theory

Deduction

Induction versus Deduction

Induction

- Observation $\rightarrow$ theory

Deduction

- Theory $\rightarrow$ observation

Questions?

The Scientific Method

- Start with a question

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- Start with a question
- Review the literature

The Scientific Method

- Start with a question
- Review the literature
- Generate an informed hypothesis

The Scientific Method

- Start with a question
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- Generate an informed hypothesis
- Collect data

The Scientific Method

- Start with a question
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- Test the hypothesis

The Scientific Method

- Start with a question
- Review the literature
- Generate an informed hypothesis
- Collect data
- Test the hypothesis
- Replication

Characteristics of the Scientific Method

- Objective

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- Objective
- Empirical

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- Systematic, cumulative, self-correcting

Characteristics of the Scientific Method

- Objective
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- Systematic, cumulative, self-correcting
- **Falsifiable**

Falsifiability

- *"A scientific statement is one that could possibly be proven wrong."* - Karl Popper

Falsifiability

- Key feature of the scientific method

Falsifiability

- Key feature of the scientific method
- *The capacity of a theory to be refuted, when presented with contradictory evidence*

Falsifiability

- "Unicorns exist" is an **unfalsifiable** statement

Falsifiability

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  - It cannot be disproved, refuted.

Falsifiability

- "Unicorns exist" is an **unfalsifiable** statement
  - It cannot be disproved, refuted.
  - Not a scientific statement

Falsifiability

- "Unicorns do not exist" is a **falsifiable** statement

Falsifiability

- "Unicorns do not exist" is a **falsifiable** statement
  - It can be disproved, refuted, by the observation of single unicorn.

Falsifiability

- "Unicorns do not exist" is a **falsifiable** statement
  - It can be disproved, refuted, by the observation of single unicorn.
  - It is a scientific statement

Questions?

Exercise

- Construct a research question on a topic of your choice

Exercise

- Construct a research question on a topic of your choice
- Think about how you would answer this question

Exercise

- Construct a research question on a topic of your choice
- Think about how you would answer this question
- Is your research question *scientific*?

Summary

Key Takeaways

- What is research?

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- What is research?
- Quantitative versus qualitative research

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- Inductive versus deductive reasoning

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- What is research?
- Quantitative versus qualitative research
- Inductive versus deductive reasoning
- The scientific method and its characteristics

Groups

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  - Group 3: Wu Qiaofei, Wu Yuanyuan

Next week

- Group 1 shares two research papers that use surveys (to be discussed in Week 3)

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- Fundamentals of Research Design

Questions?